

Appln No. 10/650,679

Amendment under Rule 116 in Reply to Office action dated Aug. 26, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claim 1 (Currently amended): Apparatus for transfer of containers between a land-based vehicle and a dockside location, comprising: a wheeled conveyor moved to a an operational position underlying a terminal crane at said dockside location; roller track means mounted on the wheeled conveyor for establishing thereon a central passage lane aligned below said terminal crane in said operational position of the apparatus to guide along which movement of the containers is effected therefrom between a pair of end passage lanes in laterally spaced relation to the central passage lane; and container spreader means mounted on the wheeled conveyor above said end passage lanes for effecting said movement lateral guided displacement of the containers laterally between said central passage lane established by the roller track means and the end passage lanes along which the land-based vehicle may travel without obstruction into the wheeled conveyor.

Claim 2 (Currently amended): The apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein said wheeled conveyor comprises: a central crane unit interconnected between opposite end crane units; on which said container spreader means is being mounted only on said end crane units; and alignment guide means mounted on the central crane unit for operative positioning of the wheeled conveyor at said dockside location.

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Claim 3 (Previously presented): The apparatus as defined in claim 2, wherein said opposite end crane units respectively extend laterally beyond the central crane unit to establish the end passage lanes extending therethrough.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The apparatus as defined in claim 2 wherein said opposite end crane units respectively extend laterally beyond the central crane unit to establish the end passage lanes therethrough.

Claim 5 (Currently amended): The apparatus as defined in claim 3, including hopper guide means mounted on the central crane unit for vertical transfer of the containers ~~to-and-from between the wheeled conveyor and the terminal crane~~ at said dockside location.

Claim 6 (Currently amended): A method for transfer of containers between a land-based vehicle and a dockside location, comprising the steps of: positioning a common track passage lane of predetermined length in alignment below a marine terminal crane for movement of along which the containers are moved therealong; establishing two parallel spaced passage lanes on opposite sides of the positioned common track passage lane along which the land-based vehicle may approach and depart without obstruction; laterally transferring the containers between the land-based vehicle and the positioned common track passage lane at longitudinally spaced locations thereon; and transferring the containers between the marine terminal crane and to-and from the positioned common track passage lane in a vertical direction at said dockside location between said longitudinally spaced locations.

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Claim 7 (Currently amended): The method as defined in claim 6, wherein said land-based vehicle is a truck having a chassis on which the containers are carried; and said transferring of the containers in the vertical direction being effected by means of said a marine terminal crane at the dockside location.